

Message Text

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62

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EI

SUBJ: WAGE CLAIM THREATENS IRISH PAY AGREEMENT

1. PRESS REPORTS FEDERATION OF CRAFT UNIONS REPRESENTING 40,000 WORKERS DECIDED NOVEMBER 29 TO DEMAND OVER 33 PERCENT PAY INCREASE PLUS FOURTH WEEK ANNUAL LEAVE. INCREASE WOULD RAISE PAY FROM NEARLY 75 PENCE PER HOUR TO ONE POUND.

2. CRAFT WORKERS INVOLVED IN WIDE SPECTRUM IRISH INDUSTRY, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION, INDUSTRIES INVOLVING MAINTENANCE CRAFTSMEN, ENGINEERING CONTRACT SHOPS, ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING, FURNITURE, GARAGES, AUTOMOBILE ASSEMBLY, SHEETMETAL, TOBACCO, PAPER AND CONCRETE MANUFACTURING. CRAFT WORKERS REPORTEDLY FEEL THEY HAVE DONE POORLY VIS A VIS OTHER WORKERS IN PREVIOUS TWO VOLUNTARY EMPLOYER/LABOR WAGE PACTS, BUT EXCEPTIONAL INCREASES FOR THEM WOULD OBVIOUSLY INCREASE DEMANDS BY OTHER TYPE WORKERS.

3. CRAFT WORKERS' DEMAND ALL THE MORE SERIOUS AS IT COMES DURING NEGOTIATIONS FOR RENEWED NATIONAL PAY
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AGREEMENT. SECOND AGREEMENT EXPIRES DECEMBER 31.

GOI AND FINANCIAL OBSERVERS HAVE REPEATEDLY URGED
RESTRAINT TO KEEP IRISH UNIT LABOR COSTS COMPETITIVE
(THEY ROSE 11 PERCENT LAST YEAR). HOWEVER, WITH
CONSUMER PRICES RISING AT RECORD 11 PERCENT ANNUAL
RATE, A RASH OF INDUSTRIAL UNREST INVOLVING SMALL
NUMBERS BUT WIDE VARIETY OF OCCUPATIONS, AND WAGE
CLAIMS SUCH AS THAT DEMANDED BY CRAFT WORKERS,
PROSPECTS FOR MODERATE AGREEMENT ARE NOT AUSPICIOUS.
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